

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 15704

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP DS, JEFFORDS, JAMES, M.

SUBJECT: SUHARTO MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS

1. SUMMARY: IN MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS (R-VT) DECEMBER 4 PRESIDENT SUHARTO EXPLAINED ATTITUDE TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS, PLACING EMPHASIS ON RESPONSIBILITY OF CITIZEN TOWARD STATE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRY. CONGRESSMAN STRESSED IMPORTANCE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN U.S. CONGRESS. BOTH JEFFORDS AND AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED WELCOME RECENT INDONESIAN STEP IN RELEASING AND PROJECTING RELEASE DETAINEES. END SUMMARY.

2. IN HALF-HOUR MEETING DECEMBER 5, INDONESIAN PRESIDENT SUHARTO RECEIVED CONGRESSMAN JAMES M. JEFFORDS OF VERMONT WHO IS IN INDONESIA ON A NINETEEN-DAY VISIT. CONGRESSMAN ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR NEWSOM AND STAFF ASSISTANT DUNSMORE. PRESENT ON INDONESIAN SIDE WERE MINISTER OF STATE SUDHARMONO AND PARNARKA OF CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES.

3. AFTER GREETINGS, PRESIDENT SUHARTO SAID HE HOPED CONGRESSMAN WOULD BE ABLE SPEAK TO MANY PEOPLE, BOTH WITHIN GOVERNMENT AND OUTSIDE. HE WOULD FIND DIFFERENCES OF OPINION IN INDONESIA. SUCH DIFFERENCES PERMITTED WHERE THEY DID NOT THREATEN SECURITY.

4. EXPLAINING THAT INDONESIA IS DEVELOPING COUNTRY AND THAT DEVELOPMENT HAS HIGHEST PRIORITY, PRESIDENT SAID OFTEN DESIRES OF CITIZENS MUST BE SACRIFICED TO HIGHER INTEREST OF STATE'S DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY, EVEN IF IT IS AT PERSONAL INCONVENIENCE.

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SOME CONSIDER THIS VIOLATION HUMAN RIGHTS. INDONESIA DOES

NOT SEE IT THIS WAY. INDONESIA BELIEVES IN HUMAN RIGHTS BUT ALSO FEELS THERE IS HIGHER RESPONSIBILITY. PRESIDENT MENTIONED SOME LIMITATIONS ON FREEDOM OF PRESS AS EXAMPLE.

5. REFERRING TO DETAINEES FROM 1965/66 PERIOD, PRESIDENT SUHARTO EXPLAINED THAT THEY HAD BEEN CLASSIFIED INTO A,B, AND C CATAGORIES. HE DESCRIBED A CATAGORY AS THOSE WHO WERE "GUILTY" AND ON WHOM THERE WAS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE FOR TRIAL. HE SAID THOSE NOT YET TRIED WOULD BE TRIED SOON. THOSE IN B CATAGORY WERE ACTIVE IN COMMUNIST PARTY, BUT THERE WAS NOT SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE FOR TRIAL. THEY WERE BEING RELEASED. ALL C CATAGORY, "THOSE WHO JUST WENT ALONG", HAD BEEN RELEASED. PRESIDENT ADDED THAT B CATAGORY DETAINEES WERE BEING HELD, IN PART, FOR THEIR OWN PROTECTION SINCE THERE WERE THOSE WHO STILL SOUGHT REVENGE ON THEM.

6. CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS SAID HE WELCOMED PRESIDENT'S EXPLANATION. IN HIS VISIT TO DATE HE HAD SPOKEN WITH ADMIRAL SUDOMO AND OTHERS ON HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION. THIS WAS ISSUE OF IMPORTANCE TO CONGRESS. HE BELIEVED INDONESIA SINCERE IN ITS DESIRE RELEASE DETAINEES AND FELT RELEASE OF LAST WEEK WAS GOOD STEP. HE UNDERSTOOD INDONESIA'S PROBLEM AND REASONS FOR RELOCATING THOSE RELEASED IN TRANS-MIGRATION CENTERS IN OUTER ISLANDS. THERE WERE THOSE IN CONGRESS WHO WOULD BE SKEPTICAL ON THIS POINT. HE HOPED HE COULD HELP EXPLAIN INDONESIA'S PROBLEM AND THE REASONS FOR ARRANGEMENTS FOLLOWING RELEASE OF DETAINEES.

7. PRESIDENT INTERJECTED TO STRESS THAT, WITH "POPULATION EXPLOSION" ON JAVA, RELOCATION OF THOSE RELEASED ON OTHER ISLANDS WAS ONLY ANSWER.

8. CONGRESSMAN SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO FURTHER UNDERSTANDING OF INDONESIA'S DEVELOPMENT AND PROBLEMS. HE HOPED THERE COULD BE ADDITIONAL CONGRESSIONAL VISITS NEXT YEAR AND THAT THESE VISITING CONGRESSIONAL VISITS NEXT YEAR AND THAT THESE VISITING CONGRESSMEN WOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE FIRSTHAND "TRANSMIGRATION PROJECTS." IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY BE CONVINCED THAT THE DETAINEES ARE TRULY FREE AND ONCE AGAIN PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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INDONESIAN SOCIETY.

9. AMBASSADOR TOOK OCCASION TO SAY THAT USG WELCOMED LASTEST MOVE IN INDONESIA ON HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH WAS ISSUE IMPORTANT TO EXECUTIVE AS WELL AS CONGRESS.

10. FOREGOING MESSAGE CLEARED WITH CONGRESSMAN JEFFORDS. NEWSOM

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